

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 3-9 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3-5 and 7-9 are amended and claim 2 is cancelled. Claims 1, 8 and 9 are amended to include the subject matter of original claim 2 and for form. Claims 3-5 are amended to depend from claim 1. Claim 5 is amended for form. Claim 7 is amended into independent form and to include the subject matter of claim 2. Thus, no new matter is added.

Reconsideration based on the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants' appreciate the Office Action's indication that claims 2-6 include allowable subject matter. Claim 1 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 2, and thus claim 1 is in allowable condition.

II. The Claims Satisfy All Formal Requirements

The Office Action objects to claims 1, 5, 8 and 9 for informalities. Regarding claim 1, the Office Action asserts that the first occurrence of the recitation "the" on line 7 should be changed to "a" and the recitation "that" on line 8 should be changed to "the control device." By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to obviate the rejection.

Regarding claim 5, the Office Action asserts that the second occurrence of the recitation "the" on line 2 should be changed to "a." By this Amendment, claim 5 is amended to obviate the rejection.

Regarding claim 8, the Office Action asserts that the first occurrence of the recitation "the" on line 5 should be changed to "a," the second occurrence of the recitation "the" on line 6 should be changed to "a," and the recitation "starting" should be inserted between "lighting" and "time" on line 6. By this Amendment, claim 8 is amended to obviate the rejection.

Regarding claim 9, the Office Action asserts that the first occurrence of the recitation "the" on line 6 should be changed to "a," the second occurrence of the recitation "the" on line 8 should be changed be "a" and the recitation "starting" should be inserted between "lighting" and "time" on line 8. By this Amendment, claim 9 is amended to obviate the objection.

Accordingly, withdrawal and reconsideration of the objection are respectfully requested.

III. The Claims Satisfy 37 C.F.R. §1.175(c)

The Office Action objects to claim 7 as allegedly being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of the previous claim. By this Amendment, claim 7 is amended into independent form. Accordingly, withdrawal and reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,634,757 to Asakawa; and rejects claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Asakawa. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As acknowledged by the Office Action on page 7, none of the applied art teaches or suggests a circuit to drive a light source that includes a discharge tube, "the switching between the plurality of lighting modes being performed from one or more seconds," as recited in original claim 2.

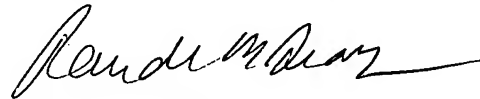
Claim 1, and similarly independent claims 7-9, are amended to include "switching between a plurality of lighting modes being performed for one or more seconds." Thus, claims 1 and 7-9 are patentable over Asakawa. Accordingly, withdrawal and reconsideration of the rejection are respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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